

### AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended): A method for managing data comprising:  
providing a data element that includes metadata within said data element;  
storing data management information in the metadata, said data management information for managing said data element;  
storing, within said data element, one or more anchor points to begin selected analysis processes; and  
storing data management rules and processing rules in the metadata[.]; and  
wherein the management information comprises one of a pointer to a sequencing rule, a pointer to a management rule, a pointer to an anchor point for beginning a selected analysis process, or a pointer to a processing rule.
2. (Original): The method of claim 1, wherein the management information comprises a time stamp.
3. (Canceled)
4. (Currently amended): The method of claim 1 [[3]], wherein the management rule comprises one of performance criteria, reliability criteria, availability criteria, and capacity criteria.
5. (Canceled)
6. (Original): The method of claim 1, wherein the management information comprises a sequencing rule.
7. (Original): The method of claim 6, wherein the sequencing rule comprises one of a logical rule, a time rule, and a structure rule.
8. (Canceled)

9. (Original): The method of claim 1, wherein the management information comprises a management function for accomplishing management rules.
10. (Currently amended): The method of claim 1, wherein ~~associating is accomplished by physically storing~~ the metadata is physically stored with the data.
11. (Currently amended): The method of claim 1, wherein ~~associating is accomplished by storing~~ a pointer is stored with the data that allows one to locate the metadata.
12. (Currently amended): The method of claim 1, wherein anchor points are pointers to the current location of the metadata for selected data elements.
13. (Original): The method of claim 1, wherein anchor points are copies of the metadata for selected data elements.
14. (Original): The method of claim 1, wherein processing rules define the order of selecting data elements for processing.
15. (Original): The method of 1, wherein processing rules define controls for processing management information for each data element.
16. (Original): The method of claim 15, wherein the processing controls include sequential processing in priority order.
17. (Original): The method of claim 15, wherein the processing controls include indexed processing following specific tree structures first.
18. (Original): The method of claim 15, wherein the processing controls include parallel processing.